

need. The resolution I present here is a recognition of our responsibility to protect the American people from the horrors of radiation exposure as best we can.

In this era of terrorism, the ultimate fear has always been the detonation of either a nuclear or radiological device in an American city by terrorists. Even a low-yield nuclear device is capable of causing large-scale damage.

After a blast occurs the radiation that follows is also an enormous concern.

We cannot counter the effects of a thermonuclear explosion. However, science is developing countermeasures to the medical effects of radiation exposure. These whole-body drugs, known as radioprotectants, represent a great step forward in protecting American citizens from the horrors of terrorism in the nuclear age.

This resolution expresses the sense of Congress that these drugs, if proven safe and effective, should be purchased and stockpiled by the federal government at the earliest possible opportunity under Project Bioshield.

This resolution recognizes the potential these drugs stand for, and is the first step toward appropriating the first effective medical countermeasures to radiation sickness. I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution as part of our responsibility to safeguard American lives.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2005*

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, on the afternoon of March 10th until the morning of March 15th, I was part of an official congressional delegation to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Iwo Jima. The delegation also had official events in Guam and Hawaii. Due to my absence I was not able to make the following votes and would like the record to indicate that I would have voted "nay" on roll call vote number 62. I would have voted "aye" on roll call votes number 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, and 68.

#### TRIBUTE TO FLORIDA MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY, AN OUTSTANDING HBCU AND A TRULY GREAT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING

#### HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2005*

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise to pay tribute to Florida Memorial College, which will become Florida Memorial University during campus ceremonies to be held on Friday, March 18, 2005.

Founded in 1879 as the Florida Baptist Institute in Live Oak, Florida under the aegis of the Baptist Church and the leadership of the Rev. Matthew Gilbert, Florida Memorial is one of the oldest academic centers in Florida. It was later transferred to Jacksonville in 1892 as the Florida Baptist Academy. It was on this campus that faculty member J. Rosamond John-

son and his brother James Weldon Johnson co-wrote "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing," which is now known as the Negro National Anthem.

In 1968 the College moved to Miami, Florida where it has grown to include a student body of 1,378 students from all over Florida, the Nation and the Caribbean. President Dr. Albert E. Smith has provided inspired leadership of the institution and its 66-member faculty. Dr. Smith has been very effective in attracting talented professors and students, and in shaping one of Florida's most beautiful college campuses.

Florida Memorial offers thirty-eight degree programs through its seven academic divisions. It is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and is recognized by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSB) and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

Throughout its glorious history, Florida Memorial has graduated thousands of professionals who have made history and are making productive, innovative contributions to this Nation and the world. It is for this reason that this transformation from Florida Memorial College to Florida Memorial University is genuinely deserved, for it manifests in no small measure the excellence of its programs and its significance in our community.

My best wishes to President Smith, his staff, faculty, student body and alumni on this great achievement. It is thrilling to imagine what this great institution will achieve in the next 124 years.

#### A TRIBUTE TO SAM LAMANTIA JR.

#### HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2005*

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker I rise today to pay special tribute to Sam Lamantia Jr., a man with a heart of gold who has spent 27 years raising money to help abused children. Sam is a master barber in Baltimore, and in 1978 he almost single-handedly started the Ed Block Courage Awards.

Sam Lamantia conceived of the award as a way to help abused children in Baltimore. Named for Ed Block, the athletic trainer for the Baltimore Colts, the award was first designed to honor one Baltimore Colt player a year. Since then, 17 Ed Block Courage Houses have opened in NFL cities around the Nation, helping abused children and their families.

Sam moved with his family from Italy to Baltimore as a young child. In Baltimore, he grew up playing and loving sports. As an adult, Sam and his boyhood friends from the Eastside Athletic Club began sponsoring sports teams and giving back to local charities. Eventually, they conceived of the Ed Block Courage Award, and Sam talked many of his clients who were members of the Baltimore Colts into helping. Sam's vision of giving back to the community has now grown to include 28 NFL teams and their players.

I hope my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives will join me in saluting Sam Lamantia Jr., a true hero who has found a way to help bring hope back into the lives of abused children.

#### RECOGNIZING VERIZON'S HISPANIC SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

#### HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2005*

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the California Chapter of Verizon's Hispanic Support Organization for hosting the 7th Annual Hispanic Support Organization National Conference. Since its establishment in 1988, the Hispanic Support Organization, a Verizon employee resource group, has been working to advance the professional needs of Hispanic employees, improve the communities where Hispanics live in, and support Verizon's initiatives in the Hispanic community.

It is my pleasure to recognize groups like Verizon's Hispanic Support Organization for their service to the professional development of our Latino community. This year's theme for the conference is called: "Construyendo Nuestro Futuro y Destino/Building Our Future and Our Destiny." The Hispanic Support Organization has been doing this kind of investment in our community for more than 16 years. With the growth of the Hispanic community in the United States, it is important that organizations keep providing opportunities for the personal and professional development of Hispanics.

Verizon's Hispanic Support Organization has done an outstanding job with their mentorship program and scholarship program, while at the same time providing financial assistance to organizations that serve the needs of the Hispanic community. The intellectual and social benefit that the Hispanic Support Organization provides to its members fosters an environment of support and encourages the creation of leaders in our community. I wish the Hispanic Support Organization much success at its conference in Los Angeles this week and in the future.

#### INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT FOR H.R. 1292—SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING CORRECTION

#### HON. STEVE BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2005*

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, Chapter 21 of title 38, United States Code, provides for grants to adapt or acquire suitable housing for certain severely disabled veterans, including veterans who are unable to ambulate without assistance. The maximum grant amount for a severely disabled veteran is \$50,000.

Public Law 108-183 extended eligibility for the adaptive housing grant to severely disabled servicemembers who have not yet been processed for discharge from military service, but who will qualify for the benefit upon discharge due to the severity of their disabilities. Prior to Public Law 108-183, qualifying servicemembers were not allowed to apply for or receive the grant until they were actually discharged from military service.

Section 401 of S. 2486, Public Law 108-454, extends eligibility for specially adapted housing grants to veterans with permanent and total service-connected disabilities due to

the loss, or loss of use, of both arms at or above both elbows.

An inadvertent error occurred in the drafting of the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2004, which the Committee discovered too late to be corrected without jeopardizing passage of the same bill in both the House and Senate before adjournment. The error resulted in the omission of the change made by Public Law 108-183 for catastrophically disabled servicemembers. H.R. 1292 serves to correct that oversight.

Mr. Speaker, this is a necessary correction to ensure the Department of Veterans Affairs continues to assist those severely disabled servicemembers who require their homes be adapted to their disability. I urge my colleagues to support it.

#### HOUSE DEMOCRACY ASSISTANCE COMMISSION RESOLUTION

**HON. RUSH D. HOLT**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2005*

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was pleased to vote in support of the resolution (H. Res. 135) sponsored by U.S. Representative DAVID DREIER from California. Adoption of this measure will establish the House Democracy Assistance Commission.

This new internal commission of House members will work closely with our legislative counterparts in other fledgling democracies to encourage the development of democratic processes and institutions. In addition, it will expand information exchanges and the sharing of first-hand knowledge of the inner workings of functioning democracies. Finally, this new commission will provide recommendations to the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development on what types of material assistance, such as modern automation, information technology, and library systems will most help our counterpart parliamentarians to more effectively perform their vital tasks of representation and democratic participation.

The work that this commission will perform has already been validated in prior similar efforts. Between 1990 and 1996, the informal "Frost-Solomon Task Force" provided invaluable technical assistance and equipment to Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Russia. The creation of this new commission will build upon that solid precedent in enhancing democratic institution-building where democratic engagement and republican government are new to what had previously been undemocratic societies.

#### INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO AWARD THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2005*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce my recent introduction of legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the

Tuskegee Airmen. The Congressional Gold Medal was first awarded over 200 years ago to Americans whose courage and determination in battle exemplified the spirit of our nation.

In keeping with this tradition, I am honored to join with Senator LEVIN in concurrently introducing this legislation to bestow Congress' highest honor to this deserving group of individuals.

The Tuskegee Airmen overcame segregation and prejudice to become one of the most highly respected fighter groups of World War II. In so doing, they helped to destroy the racist conceptions of their time, and set in motion the eventual desegregation of the Armed Services.

Before 1940, African Americans were barred from flying for the U.S. military. However, the great threat posed by the Nazis, and the demands of Black Americans for full citizenship, including the right to fight for their country as patriots, persuaded the American government to provide an opportunity for African Americans to serve, even though in segregated units.

The Airmen completed 15,500 missions, destroyed 260 enemy aircraft, sank one enemy destroyer, and demolished numerous enemy installations. They also would have the WWII distinction of never losing a bomber under their escort, despite flying in some of the enemies' most heavily defended areas.

During their World War II service, the Airmen would earn 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 744 Air Medals, 8 Purple Hearts, and 14 Bronze Stars. At the war's end they had not only helped to defeat the Germans, they helped to set in motion the eventual desegregation of the Armed Services a few years later.

The Tuskegee Airmen were patriots in the truest sense of the word. Their belief in themselves, and in the promise of America, gave them the strength to overcome incredible obstacles, and accomplish what was then considered impossible. Their courage inspired a generation, and their determination strengthened a nation.

The Tuskegee Airmen deserve an honor befitting their contribution to our country, so I respectfully urge my fellow colleagues to support this legislation.

#### IN CELEBRATION OF ARTS ADVOCACY DAY 2005

**HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2005*

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Arts Advocacy Day. As Congress considers the budget and appropriations bills for fiscal year 2006, the importance of the arts should be recognized for a number of reasons.

First, the arts contribute significantly to local economic development. As of January 2005 in the Eleventh Congressional District of Ohio there were 1,212 arts-related businesses that employed 10,174 people. This data, from Dun & Bradstreet, indicates that between 2004 and 2005, arts-related businesses grew at a faster rate than total U.S. business growth. At the same time, as total U.S. jobs shrank by 1.9

percent, the decline in arts-related businesses was 0.8 percent, in other words less than half that rate. Arts-related businesses are clearly good for business and good for the economy. But the arts have greater effects than these.

An examination of SAT scores from the College Board in the period 2002 through 2004 reflects a startling effect. Data from Ohio students that studied Art History, Dance, Drama, Music, Photography/Film, or Studio Art reflected higher Verbal and Math SAT scores than students that didn't study any of these subjects. To further quantify this effect, let me provide an example: Ohio students in music performance reflected a Mean Verbal SAT score of 554 in 2004 and a Mean Math score of 552. In contrast, Ohio students not exposed to arts courses demonstrated a 2004 Mean Verbal SAT score of 497 and a Mean Math score of 511. This forty point differential benefit is very easy to understand. Nationally, similar effects were reflected in the test scores of students that studied a variety of arts disciplines: Art History, Dance, Drama, Photography/Film, or Studio Art.

As schools focus on raising test scores, the importance of arts cannot be overstated. But conflicting attitudes and practices exist in Ohio's schools. A 2000 survey by the Ohio Alliance For Arts Education reflected that more than 70 percent of those surveyed in Ohio's public schools believed that music and visual arts are as important as other academic subjects. Yet, in practice over 11 years, public schools demonstrated overall reductions in arts and music education. Fewer private schools (than public schools) required achievement in the arts as a graduation requirement. But a higher percentage of private schools believed that creative writing, music, visual arts, and drama are as important as other academic subjects. Here, theory and practice don't match.

It is clear that the arts enhance student ability. During this time of enhanced accountability and high stakes academic testing, it would make sense to ensure that every child, kindergarten through twelfth grade, is provided an opportunity to participate in the arts. Many school districts are experiencing financial difficulty. To that end, instead of punishing schools for failing test scores, we should provide them with the resources needed to implement quality arts education programs—which correlate with increased test scores. Arts education enhances literacy. And we should go further than haphazardly sticking in a few programs here and there. Quality matters. We must be concerned about the quality of subject matter as well as teacher training and development.

The No Child Left Behind Act, NCLB, has recognized the arts as a core academic subject, making arts programs eligible for inclusion in broad funding categories such as teacher training, school reform, and technology. In spite of this designation, NCLB has led to the erosion of arts education. Economically disadvantaged schools don't have sufficient resources to cover enhanced intensive math and English studies, and quality arts education programs. A 2004 report by the Council for Basic Education found that "the greatest erosion of the curriculum is occurring in schools with high minority populations—the very populations whose access to such a curriculum has been historically most limited." We